

Dexter City Update

Pedestrian Safety Special Issue

Summer 2019

Volume 5, Issue 3

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Message From The Mayor

Hello Residents and Business Owners,

This special issue of the Dexter Newsletter is focused on Pedestrian Safety in and around the City of Dexter. The City of Dexter takes great pride in being a walkable community that is safe for both the travelling public and our non-motorized walkers, runners and bikers. As summer transitions into fall, we will see an increase in our morning and afternoon traffic volumes as parents from throughout the school district and school buses resume their daily routines to get our kids to and from school. This increase in traffic always takes a few weeks to get used to. We ask for your increased focus and awareness as all drivers get used to the increased volumes. We will also see an increase in pedestrian traffic at these early morning hours and throughout the afternoon as school gets out. Kids of all ages will be walking to/from school carrying books and lunchboxes. Many of them will cross our busiest streets at multiple locations. Please be on high alert and yield to pedestrians as they try to cross our City (Baker, Main, Dexter-Ann Arbor and Dan Hoey) and nearby County roadways (Shield).

Over the past year, the City and Dexter Community Schools have worked together to find ways to improve pedestrian safety at certain areas in the City. The School District has made some operational decisions that encourage more students to walk not only to school, but between school buildings after school. Kids will regularly be walking from Wylie Elementary up Kensington and crossing Dexter Ann Arbor Road to get to the after school care facilities. Large groups of kids will also make their way across Baker Road in the afternoon from Creekside to the Bus Hub. A walking map has been created that identifies key designated school crossings in the City of Dexter. To alert drivers of the increased pedestrian activity, the City has invested in four additional Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) at key locations along Baker, Dexter AA Road and Dan Hoey. This means that there will now be 5 RRFB's in the City (6 if you count the one on Shield just outside the City limits). We are also adding new sidewalk on the northeast side of Forest from Baker to Kensington. These improvements will help provide our kids safe walking paths and safe crossing opportunities. However, all drivers in our community need to cooperate and help by yielding whenever a pedestrian is crossing the street. This newsletter provides tips and rules about RRFB's, what to expect and how to watch and respect their use. It also provides instructions for using a rapid flashing beacon, information for anyone interested in becoming a crossing guard, and a description of how Central Street will look and function.

Over the next 8 to 9 months, the City will begin construction on another segment of non-motorized trail. We refer to this as the Mill Creek Park – Phase 2 Pathway, which will extend from the southern end of Mill Creek Park near the trailhead at Grand Street south along Mill Creek behind Forest Lawn Cemetery and connect to Baker Road on the north side of the new ball diamonds at Creekside Intermediate School. The City applied for and received approximately \$620,000 in grants from two funding sources (State of Michigan Transportation Alternatives Program and Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation) that will help pay for this improvement. The City would like to thank the leadership of the Dexter Community Schools and their Board for their cooperation in helping the City plan this future trail segment.

I hope everyone has had a great summer season. I look forward to seeing you around our town.

Shawn Keough, Mayor



City E-Mail Update

Interested in timely Dexter News?

Sign up for the email list by emailing the City Manager at CNicholls@DexterMI.gov

Crossing Guards Needed

The City of Dexter has taken over the responsibility of hiring and training school crossing guards within the City. During a one-year pilot program, a crossing guard will be stationed at the rapid flashing beacons that will be installed at Ann Arbor St/Kensington and Baker Rd at the pedestrian island. Hours will be approximately 7:45 am to 8:15 am and 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm for the Ann Arbor Street crossing and 7:30 am to 8:00 am and 2:50 pm to 3:20 pm for the Baker Road crossing. Crossing guards will earn \$13.50 an hour. Multiple positions are available, and training will be provided. For more information or to apply for the position please contact the City Office at 734-426-8303 or e-mail cnicholls@dextermi.gov.

Central Street

This fall, the construction project on Central Street will be complete. Over the past ten years the City has been working towards reconstructing Central, as local and state funds were available. To enhance pedestrian safety, stamped colored crosswalks will be added, along with additional street lighting. Bike lanes will also be added. The enhancements will match the current look of the roadway that exists between the City limits and Third Street.

Back To School

School started Tuesday, September 3, 2019. Please be prepared for increased vehicle, bus and pedestrian traffic in and around the City. School hours are as follows:

Creekside/High School - 8:00 a.m. to 2:52 p.m. (11:25 a.m. on half days)

All other schools - 8:14 a.m. to 3:06 p.m. (11:40 a.m. on half days)

School Crossing Upgrades

The City and Dexter Community Schools have worked together to designate four school crossings that will receive enhancements to assist students as they cross to access the school campus. The four crossing areas receiving the enhancements are described below. The rapid flashing beacons and crossing guards are expected to be in place by mid-October.

Ann Arbor Street just west of Kensington. This designated school crossing location will be just west of the current intersection. It is being moved away from the intersection so that the turning movements at the intersection are not a distraction from watching for pedestrians. The new crossing will have a rapid flashing beacon. Due to the traffic volume, the City is planning a one year pilot program to have a crossing guard at this location to assist students before and after school.

Dan Hoey near Lexington. This designated school crossing will be east of the current location, which is along the driveway to Mill Creek. The location will be moved so that students only have to cross two lanes of traffic. This crossing will have a rapid flashing beacon and the installation of additional lighting is being planned.

Dan Hoey near Walkbout Creek. This designated school crossing will have a rapid flashing beacon and the installation of additional lighting is being planned.

Baker Road at the Pedestrian Island. This designated school crossing will have a rapid flashing beacon and the installation of additional lighting is being planned. Due to the traffic volume, the City is planning a one year pilot program to have a crossing guard at this location to assist students before and after school.

Crossing Reminders

According to State Law, drivers must yield to pedestrians within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is in or near the same half of the street as the driver. Drivers can choose to stop at a crosswalk to allow a pedestrian waiting to cross the street to cross, but it is not required regardless of the presence of a rapid flashing beacon. If you are a pedestrian, please check for traffic before using any crosswalk. Walk defensively and make eye contact with drivers to ensure that they see you. Never assume that you are seen or that a motorist will yield. Don't leave the curb or go into the path of a vehicle which is so close that the driver can't yield.



RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACONS (RRFB)

RRFBs can enhance safety by increasing driver awareness of people who want to cross the street at a crosswalk. When installed at unsignalized crosswalks, the RRFBs have been shown to be more effective than standard signing and pavement markings alone. RRFBs are activated by pedestrians and bicyclists by manually pushing a button. Once the button is pushed, a highly visible flashing pattern, similar to flashers on emergency vehicles, alerts drivers that a person wants to cross the street.

Pedestrian Tips

ALWAYS REMEMBER: STOP. LOOK LEFT, THEN RIGHT, AND LEFT AGAIN BEFORE CROSSING.

- ⇒ Push the button to turn on the RRFB.
- ⇒ Check for traffic before using crosswalk. Walk defensively and make eye contact with drivers to ensure that they see you. Never assume that you are seen or that a motorist will yield.
- ⇒ While crossing stay within the crosswalk and continue to check for traffic.
- ⇒ **Don't leave the curb or go into the path of a vehicle which is so close that the driver can't yield.**



How does a RRFB Work?

1. A pedestrian activates the RRFB by pressing the button.
2. The RRFB begins to flash to alert drivers that a pedestrian wants to cross the street in the crosswalk.
3. Flashing lights facing the pedestrian confirm the activation of the RRFB.
4. The RRFB flashes for a set time that allows a pedestrian adequate time to cross the street.
5. After the allocated time has passed for the pedestrians to complete their crossing, the RRFB turns off.



CITY OF DEXTER

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Driver Tips

DRIVERS ARE REQUIRED TO YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS IN A CROSSWALK.

- ⇒ A driver must yield to pedestrians within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is in or near the same half of the street as the driver, even if the RRFB is not activated.
- ⇒ Be alert and reduce speed in areas with crosswalks.
- ⇒ Do not drive distracted, including talking or texting on your phone.
- ⇒ Yield, slow down or stop if necessary if a pedestrian is crossing within a crosswalk.
- ⇒ Do not pass another vehicle that is stopped at or slowing down for a crosswalk.
- ⇒ Refer to the Michigan Vehicle Code and the Uniform Traffic Code for legal responsibilities of the driver.

City of Dexter
8140 Main St
Dexter MI 48130
(734) 426-8303

Mayor:
Shawn Keough

Council Members:
Scott Bell
Paul Cousins
Donna Fisher
Julie Knight
Zach Michels
James Smith

City Staff
Courtney Nicholls
City Manager
Justin Breyer
Clerk & Asst to City Manager
Michelle Aniol
Community Development
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Assistant Planner
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The City Offices are located at 8123 Main St, 2nd Floor, above the PNC Bank. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Elected Officials:

Mayor
Shawn Keough: SKeough@DexterMI.gov (313) 363-1434

Council Members
Scott Bell: SBell@DexterMI.gov (734) 646-5465
Paul Cousins: PCousins@DexterMI.gov (734) 548-3293
Donna Fisher: DFisher@DexterMI.gov (734) 649-5169
Julie Knight: JKnight@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-4961
Zach Michels: ZMichels@DexterMI.gov (734) 726-0616
Jim Smith: JDSmith@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-8885

Staff:

City Manager: CNicholls@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2229
Clerk/Asst. to the Manager: JBreyer@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2234
Treasurer/Finance/Assessor: MSherry@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2231
Community Development: MAniol@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2233
Assistant Planner: MAuerbach@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2235
Utility Billing: EAiken@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2232
Administrative Assistant: BTuscano@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2230
Public Works: KAugustine@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-8530
Public Utilities: DSchlaff@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-4572

Utilities After Hour Emergencies: (734) 368-5212

City Ordinance Reminders:

Dog waste must be collected and disposed of in a trash can. The City has provided trash receptacles and dog waste disposal units throughout town. Dog waste is not suitable for recycle, compost or storm drains. Not collecting dog waste or intentionally throwing into a City storm drain is an ordinance violation. (City Ordinance Sec. 10-37)

Riding a bicycle on the sidewalks downtown is not permitted. Bicycle riders should walk their bike on the sidewalk in the downtown area. This is especially important to avoid collisions right in front of entrances to our downtown businesses. (City Ordinance Section 54-133)